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ABSTRACT

This practicum addressed the situation of a group of children in grades 1-6 who felt that church had little relevance. The introductory chapter describes the setting, organization and community in which the practicum was conducted. Chapter 2 identifies and documents the problem of children's frustration and alienation with Sunday School and worship, and analyzes the several possible causes for it. A review of literature elaborates on the problem and its causes. Chapter 3 describes the goal of the practicum as helping children see the church as relevant to them, their development, peers, family, and as an important social and community agency, and outlines the objectives and tools to be used to measure progress toward the objectives. Chapter 4 examines several approaches suggested in literature to resolve the problem under study, and, based on these approaches, includes a report of the actions taken to resolve the problem. The actions were: curriculum development and adaptation; multi-church activities; individual group time; evaluation instruments; and needs-based programs. The final chapter discusses the results of analysis of data which revealed that children who are church members and church guests will take part in church programs that are attractive, relevant, exciting, focused, and appropriate. The church attitude instrument is appended. (Includes 55 references.) (BAC)

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ED 390 561

Development and Implementation of a Church Community Based Model to Increase Religious Participation in Children Grades 1 - 6

by

Timothy Wayne Leggett

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A Practicum II Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Nova Southeastern University

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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Pastor
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June 18, 1995
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This practicum report was submitted by Timothy Wayne Leggett under the direction of the Advisor listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D Program in Early and Middle Childhood and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova Southeastern University.

APPROVED:

July 30, 1995
Date of Final Approval of Report

June S. Delano
June S. Delano, Ph.D., Advisor

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and

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ABSTRACT

Development and Implementation of a Church Community Based Model to Increase Religious Participation in Children Grades 1 - 6. Leggett, Timothy W., 1995: Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University, Ed.D Program in Early and Middle Childhood. Descriptors: Children/Religious Education/ Outreach Program/Church/Curriculum/Elementary.

The problem addressed in the practicum was that children in grades 1 - 6 in the church feel the church has no relevance for them; the children are frustrated and alienated. The children no longer attend Sunday School or worship, or even invite their neighborhood friends to a church which they state does not minister to them. The major goals were: (1) to have the children who are church members attend the church children's activities each month; (2) to have the children take part in the small group activities in each session; (3) to have one visitor in Sunday School each week in the children's division on a consistent basis; (4) to have the children who are not members of the church attend the activities each month; (5) to have the children feel they are part of the church community by an affirming attitude on the checklist.

The practicum included curriculum development and adaptation, multi-church activities, field trips, individual group time, writer designed evaluation instruments and children's self-evaluation instrument, and needs based program.

Analysis of the data revealed that children who are church members and children who are church guests will take part in church programs that are attractive, relevant, exciting, focused, appropriate. There has been a change in attitude by the children, teachers, parents and everyone who works with this age group. Quality Religious Education is taking place in the lives of the children.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Work Setting, Organization, and Community

The setting in which this practicum was performed is a church in a small city in an urban area. The church is one of ten Southern Baptist churches located within the city limits. The church serves people who live predominantly in the city with some church members living in one of two main counties. As a result of a local state university, many children grades 1-6 live in an area in the vicinity of the church. Many families in the church are related to the university, either as faculty, staff, or students.

Approximately 15 elementary age students attend church activities in the building each Sunday. The church building is located in an area surrounded by multi-family housing units, where hundreds of children live within a two-mile radius. The children of the neighborhood surrounding the church go to four different public and private elementary schools.

Based on the 1990 census information from Urban Decision Systems, there were 19,232 people in the area served by the church. Thirty-three percent of the

neighborhood consists of educated young mobile families, college students, and 20% consists of emerging minorities. According to the census, there were 217 females and males that are six years old. There were 597 males and females between the ages of seven and nine years old. Three-hundred eighty-six children were between the ages of ten and eleven.

The church has approximately 371 members who are local residents who occasionally attend with another 300 members who are non-resident non attending members. Church membership encompasses people from infancy through senior adults. People who are not members of the church, such as residents in nursing homes, hospitals, jails, homeless and needy are served by the different ministries of the church. One of the unique groups the church serves is the Deaf community in the city. Deaf people of all ages and backgrounds can be served by a staff member whose primary job is to minister to the deaf.

This particular church was established in 1935 as a mission from a much larger church in the community. In the last fifty-nine years, providing opportunities for teaching and ministering to children grades 1-6, has been at the center of the church's focus. The church's concern for children is reflected by the quality of care and program development that has taken place in the children's division area.

The education building used for children consists of

first floor offices used for church staff and three suites on the second floor used by the children's division, grades 1-6. The first suite for first and second graders consists of one large room with one small room for group time and a storage room. There are three windows that overlook the parking lot. Two teachers arrive at 9:30 A.M. on Sunday morning with the children arriving about 9:45 P.M. The children are usually accompanied to class by either significant adults or siblings. During the one hour session, a variety of teaching styles are used with the children. There is one piano, three tables appropriate for children's of this age, book racks, and a nature display. The walls are covered with religious pictures and some of the children's drawings. There is one large chalk board that covers the south wall. At 10:45 A.M. the children either go home with their parents or go to the worship hour in the sanctuary.

The second suite consists of one large room for third and fourth graders. The room also has two tables and chairs for children of this size. Four windows on the south side face another brick building about five feet from this education building. This suite is the smallest of the three children's division suites. The children are usually accompanied by a significant adult or sibling. Two teachers arrive at 9:30 P.M. with the children arriving for class at 9:45 P.M. At 10:45 P.M., the children either go with the

adults to worship service in the sanctuary or go home.

The third suite consists of one large room with a partial divider for the fifth and sixth grades. The room has a dry erase marker board and one easel that both the children and the teachers use. One mobile hangs from the room ceiling. The room has five windows that face the parking lot and the north street. The two teachers arrive about 9:30 P.M. with the children arriving for class at 9:45 P.M. The fifth and sixth graders usually go to class without being accompanied by adults or sibling. At 10:45 P.M., the children have the option to either go home or attend the worship hour to 12:00 noon.

If the children go to the sanctuary for worship, this experience consists of adult led singing, prayer, welcome, announcements, singing, taking offering, choir led special music, preaching. An invitation is given to join the church at the end of the service.

These inside facilities have been used in the past primarily on Sunday morning, Wednesday evening, and an occasional Saturday. The outside does have a small preschool playground and equipment used for preschoolers under age 6 in the church's weekday program and for preschool children in Sunday School. There is one additional acre that is used primarily for parking. Two broken basketball poles are at each end of the parking lot.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

The writer has served in administration and teaching positions in Baptist churches for the last twenty years. For the last five years the writer has been employed as a Minister of Education. The writer's responsibilities include leading the church in planning, conducting, and evaluating the church's comprehensive program of Christian Education. The primary job focus relates to administration, activities, supervising all non-ordained staff, which is not limited to the children's area.

Chapter II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

The problem addressed in this practicum was that children in grades 1-6 in the church felt the church had no relevance for them; they were frustrated and alienated.

The children no longer attended Sunday School or worship, or even invited their neighborhood friends to a church which they had stated did not minister to them. The children have been frustrated and alienated by a church that had no relevance for them as church members or has had no relevance to issues children in the community have been faced with.

The children in the church were the primary ones being affected by what had been taking place with the lack of relevance in their life. Parents and other significant adults had wondered why there has been no activities for the children and why the previous state of the children had been one of unhappiness. Teachers had been oblivious to the events that had and had not been taking place, and church members had questioned events or the lack of events in the children's division.

Many of the present teachers had worked in the children's division for many years and used the same curriculum, methods, resources, ideas, and concepts. Any attempt in the past change-the room, resources or

organization-had resulted in some of the workers saying that they liked the old ways; it was good enough for previous generations, it's good enough for today's children. Workers said that they did not have time to work with the children any day besides Sunday. Children in the church had felt the church had no relevance for them; the children were frustrated and alienated by a church that did not minister to them or deal with issues they were faced with.

Problem Documentation

Between October 1992 and September 1993, there had been a 33 percent drop of regular members in attendance in the children's division in the church by examination of church records and interviews with the children and the workers in the children's division. Further interviews with the children revealed that they wanted to bring their friends to a church which they stated had little importance in their own life. During the last six months there had only been a total of four visitors that had attended the children's division a total of six times.

No teachers, parents or children had visited the apartment complexes around the church to invite the children to any activities as documented by the church's Tuesday night outreach program sign-in sheet.

Each Sunday the children approached the Minister of Education about the lack of activities, recreation, and had no real relevant Bible study for them and that again no

neighborhood children had been visiting our church. Children did not bring their Sunday School materials to church that had been bought for them by the church nor had they taken literature home for the parents and other children to read.

Causative Analysis

There were several possible causes for the problem. Many of the volunteer teachers only saw the children for one hour on Sunday morning. Two of the teachers worked in competitive employment two or three Sundays per month.

When visitors visited the children's classes, there were no follow up cards or telephone calls made to the visiting children. All types of cards that were in the church office to be sent to the children from the Sunday School teachers had been left on the shelves in the church office week after week. No new cards had been ordered from the local Baptist Book Store in years.

Many of the children went to different schools and lived in different parts of the city with no interaction outside the church. There were four different public school systems in the area communities surrounding the church. There were three other parochial and private school systems in the area that children from the church attended. On the elementary school level, there had been no intramural sports or other activities from the school system to bring these children together for activities.

In Sunday School, the children spent their hour sitting around with no developmentally appropriate activities of interest to the children. The classes usually began at 10:00 am which was fifteen minutes late. The children had been sitting around an adult size table talking, running up and down the halls and arguing with each other. Children had been observed hanging out of an upstairs window yelling at people outside. Two children reported to the pastor that part of the hour was also spent by the teachers gossiping in front of the children about what was wrong with the church. During the remaining 30 to 45 minutes the children were read to from the teacher's book. Only on one occasion in the last three years had the teachers attended any type of training dealing with teaching, curriculum, methods, church organization.

The adult worship hour always focused on adult themes that interested adults and not children. There were never any themes in worship that focused on children's contributions to the work of the church. Only two or three times a year had the songs in the worship hour focused on children. Children had never taken up the offering, pray, or even given out the church bulletins during Sunday Morning worship hour.

Children were talking among themselves telling each other about what problems or issues they were dealing with in the home, family, and school. One child talked about

gang violence to the other children in the class at church. A fourth grade girl talked about being at home by herself after school while her mother was at work. One fifth grade boy was overheard talking about how he wanted to see his dad who lives in the same city but the mother would not let him see his dad.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Review of literature gave evidence that children were not being taught what religious life stands for and what various religious traditions have to offer. Other literature gave evidence to the problem of children's lack of interest in Sunday School, lack of denominational loyalty, absenteeism, neglect, religious vacuum, lack of risk taking, unappealing education and frustration over the same old curriculum.

Stafford (1990) found that the reason for the decline of Sunday School attendance is that teachers and other adults many times do not care about the religious education of children. Even when teachers are friendly and personable, this does not mean quality teaching is taking place. Humphrey (1984) and Kagan (1971) and Killinger (1980) and Kersey (1986) amd Kurtz (1983) all suggested that teacher behavior can also induce stress in their students, which can effects how students relate to each other.

Stafford (1990) stated that children no longer know

about the traditions that made the denomination and the church the organization is it is supposed to be. Davis (1979) states that children many times lose interest in making a public decision about their faith in God when they do not have support by their parents and church. When the church membership expects a dramatic conversion, there is the feeling that if a child does not have a dramatic conversion, then the conversion is not real. Strawn (1993) revealed that symbolic phrases that people in the church take for granted may confuse the concrete thinking child.

Blackwell (1983) and Elkind (1981) suggested that burnout takes place when a child experiences constant demands and unattainable expectation in which the child blames the world in general. Children are always in a hurry in our society (Blackwell 1983). Elkind (1981) stated even with the advent of specialized training offered at summer camp the prevailing idea is that the years of childhood should not be frittered away by engaging in activities merely for fun. The daily routine is often rigorous, with individual and/or group lessons, practice sessions and tournaments, complete with trophies. The years of childhood are seen as a time to perfect skills and abilities that are same as those for adults. Turner (1992) stated that recreational programs should not be used for their own sake. Recreation is not an activity, but rather a experience derived from the activity.

Feucht (1975) and Richards (1983) and Davis (1979) all stated that religious influence has declined in the family since a new emerging philosophy, lifestyles and goals have changed affecting children. Richards (1983) stated that the family changes continue to overwhelm people in the church. The size, and the role of parents are changing. Today over half of the children are brought up by single-parent families. With the changes in work pattern, in fragmentation of families, in segregation of children by age, in decrease of the amount of time spent by parents with children-force us to realize that the modern family is not the family of the Bible. It is not even the family of those decades prior to the 1940's.

Schultz (1992) revealed that a controlled, quiet and busy class does not insure that the children are not bored with teaching that is taking place. The material may be great, but if the teacher does not know where he is going, the class is like a rudderless ship. If the teacher tries to teach using the lecture method all the time, this unappealing note to the children says it not time to learn. This projects a teacher based classroom were the teacher is the authority with all of the answers. Stafford (1990) stated that even though Sunday Schools are friendly and personable, quality teaching may not be taking place. Schultz (1992) reveals that a teacher based classroom where the lecture method is used primarily is unappealing to

children. Children many times will complain that church is too much like school with a constant setting in chairs.

Meier (1977) suggested a legalistic, negativistic church can damage a child's emerging self-worth. They are being ruined by rigid churches that stand for the wrong things and liberal church that don't stand for anything. Coles (1990) found that children that see other children arguing at school about what religion is best, wonder does going to church make you do good and not going to church means you are not going to get God's help. Woods, (1992) Davis (1979), and Strawn (1993), stressed that a child's experiences at church or lack of experiences may limit the child's expression or awareness or reverence for God. Burke (1992) stated that children begin to attend church irregularly when they encounter crowded conditions that convey the message, I am not needed here.

Erdley (1993) considered that children who have a limited number of failure experiences may make a global, negative self judgement of themselves that they view as unchangeable in life. Harris (1989) revealed that children feel more upset or disappointed than they reveal about a social experience. Garland (1993) stated that requiring small children to sit next to their parents through long worship services the children cannot understand does not include them in worship. Having a separate worship service just for children also has the same effect on children.

Humphrey (1984), Kagan (1971), Killinger (1980), Kersey (1986), Kurtz (1983) all suggested that teacher behavior can induce stress in their students, which can effect how students relate to each other.

Killinger (1980) and Garland (1993) noted that when children speak out about the school environment, many times parents are in a quandary about what to do about the child's unhappiness. Children learn early that some of their words and ideas can make adults anxious or upset or that adults do not want to take the time to talk with them. They learn, therefore, not to talk about some things, and to make polite conversation.

Tonks (1992) revealed that unchurched children live in neighborhoods all around the church. There are families who have been in a church in the past who presently do not attend any church or take part in church activities such as "Vacation Bible School".

Brenner (1984) and Rubin (1983) stated that children from highly mobile families have the most difficulty entering the new school system environment. Garland (1993) stated that many children have a high level of anxiety as they adjust to a new school and classmates. Factors such as embarrassed by the clothes they have to wear can further cause anxiety. Chance (1989) found that there are children without friends who lack the social skills to make the transition into a new environment.

Elkind (1968) discussed that children that behave different from their peer group are punished by disdain, ostracism or other expression of disapproval by the peer group.

The literature gave evidence that religious education was many times not taking place when children were present in the home or church. Even in the community around the church children did not know what it meant to attend church or had not attended for such long time they did not remember what took place. When teachers were not prepared, when the class was closed to additional membership, when traditions were not explored, and when mastery of curriculum and demanding structure became the end result, it was damaging the child's self worth and ideas about God.

Chapter III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

Goals and Expectations

The following goals and expected outcomes were projected for this practicum. The goal of the practicum was to help the children see the church is relevant to them, their development, peers, family, and an important social and community agency.

1. Ten out of Fifteen children who are church members will attend the church children's activities each month as tabulated on a activities checklist (see Appendix A).

2. Ten out of Fifteen children will take part in the small group activities in each session as measured on the group activities checklist (see Appendix B).

3. There will be an average of one visitor in Sunday School each week in the children's division over an eight month period of time as measured on a guest attendance log (see Appendix C).

4. Five children who are not members of the church will attend seventy-five % of the children's activities during an eight month period of time as tabulated on the children's attendance log (see Appendix D).

5. Ten out of fifteen children will feel they are part of the church community as evidenced by the children completion of eight out of ten positive responses on the church attitude checklist (see Appendix E).

MEASUREMENTS

The objectives were measured by the activities checklist, group activities checklist, children's attendance log, guest attendance log, church attitude checklist.

1. The checklist will be used by the children's workers each week to document the attendance of all the children in the different activities over an eight month period of time (see Appendix A).

2. The children's workers will check off the questionnaire during the event to reflect each child's participation and interest in the small group activities over an eight month period of time (see Appendix B).

3. Each Sunday School teacher will keep up with the amount of visitors each week in their Sunday School class with the total of the division tallied each week (see Appendix C).

4. The total amount of visitors taking part in each activity will be tallied each week and also totaled at the completion of an eight month period to determine the children who had attended the activities (see Appendix D).

5. The children's workers will use an church attitude checklist that each child completed at the end of the first week of the program, the beginning of the fourth month and the end of the eighth month of the program in order to evaluate if the child liked coming to the community church activities (see Appendix E).

Daily, weekly, and monthly records of conferences with children, staff training, children's behavior, parent interaction, staff techniques, attendance and logs will be used to evaluate the growth of the children's division of church and evaluate any unexpected events that may occur.

The results will be evaluated in terms of the five objectives of the writer.

Chapter IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

The problem in this practicum, as experienced by the writer, was children in grades 1-6 felt the church had no relevance for them; they were frustrated and alienated. Children no longer attended Sunday School or worship, or invited their neighborhood friends to a church which they stated did not minister to them. These children felt the church had no relevance for them since the church did not deal with issues they and the other children of the community had to face on a daily basis. These children needed to feel and experience a church that had relevance to them which was not being provided in the present environment.

The literature suggest a number of approaches that could be successfully applied in resolving or ameliorating the problem of lack of relevance, frustration, and alienation of the children in the church environment.

According to Davis (1979), Beall (1994), Burke (1994), outreach to children in the church and neighborhood should be personal by each teacher to help children understand the Christian faith.

Canata (1991) stated that a church program must be attractive and involve the children in order for the children to want to participate. Ministry must be priority because it gives children and their parents a positive view of church. When parents see or other significant adults see

a teacher put their faith into action, they get a positive view of the people of God at work in the world (Newman 1993).

Miller (1994) stated that the summer slump in church does not have to be the experience for children's groups in church. Church campaigns emphasizing attendance, inviting and involving friends and neighbors in meaningful activities at the church are important to summer attendance. Themes for each month will help churches plan effective outreach opportunities. Themes related to amusement parks, sports, water park can be important activities. The pastor, key Sunday School leaders and the Minister of Education can lead the campaign for the program.

Feucht (1975) found that two way communication must take place by the teacher and student if learning is to take place. Current issues must be dealt with in the lives of the children. The teacher must know the children by spending more time with the children and use a curriculum that involves the children in the learning process at church.

Woods (1992), Feucht (1975), Elliot Et al (1978) stated physical activity provides a rich source of opportunity for interaction and a release of tensions. Giving kids physical activities that are non-threatening and physically challenging provides for interaction among the children. Playing games allows the children time to feel comfortable

in talking and also to helps the group to find answers as a group. Jolly (1993) stated that a good learning environment blends love, acceptance, support and security. It provides stimulating Bible-learning activities in an attractively prepared room. Woods (1992) suggested that activities in different rooms and different outdoor setting provide a rich source of truth that can be applied to their lives. Children in group activities need to learn to help people not just to be the center of attention.

Caldwell (1985) and Canata (1991) suggested that the curriculum must be interesting and understandable to the children. According to Strawn (1993), the curriculum should be biblically sound and doctrinally accurate. The curriculum should be evangelistic, educationally sound and take into consideration the developmental level of the children for whom the curriculum is written. Curriculum should help the children apply the meaning, value, and relevance of the Bible to their lives.

Feucht (1991) and Rives & Tonks (1984) all suggested that a church program must be attractive and motivating in order to hold people and motivate people to participate. Rives & Tonks (1984) found that creating a learning environment for boys and girls is important. The appearance of the room in which the group meet teaches. The feeling the children have about the room environment teaches. Rooms teach in a silent way. Children remember the teacher who

has interesting Bible activities for them to do when they arrive. Children remember the face of the teacher who meets them at the door of a room with activities to do already on the table. Children remember the interest corner of shells, leaves, and growing plants with the Bible verses that tell of God's love. Rooms that feel good and look good make a difference to workers and pupils.

Davis (1979), Elder (1976), Stith (1969), Benson (1993) revealed that the home and church should not compete in the teaching of values, they should work together in teaching values. They are partners, not competitors, in this venture. The church is the center of formal instruction. The Sunday School, training sessions, mission activities, and music activities should all strive to teach the basics of the faith and to train children how to apply these values to life. The home is the informal center for teaching values. While there may be such structured religious instruction as family devotion and prayer at meals, the home and its involvements, is a prime setting for value development.

Moorehead (1991) and Turner (1992), suggested that children's Bible study materials should incorporate color, which is easier reading. Turner (1992) stated that art activities allow the learner to find out about the elements of God's creation which is easier reading and more inviting to the children. Hamilton (1994) stated that children want

to do different art activities. By teaching children art appreciation, this gives adults an additional vehicle for the installation of values. Christian Values we want expressed can be taught through art appreciation. Art can be one of the most powerful, subtle expressions of emotion the children ever encounter.

Baker (1992), Feucht (1975), Caldwell, Branson, Piland (1985), Kendall & Elder (1980) all suggested that through genuine love and concern in practical ways children can have purpose for living. Children see themselves much the way that their parents see them. The way the children see themselves will determine what kind of people they grow up to be. Parents who receive and perceive their children as special gifts from God will communicate to them the feeling that God has made them unique being. When parents accept them in this way, children sense peace, love, and caring. They come to regard themselves as acceptable human being and as a blessing.

Turner (1992) and Feucht (1975) noted that through recreation, tensions can be released in worthwhile ways with other benefits to develop character.

Richards (1983) found that the ability and opportunity to develop real friendships during childhood meets a vital need and is a significant factor in healthy personality development. From about age nine friendships begin to be linked with personality as well as behaviors. A sense of

cooperation and mutual willingness to adjust, which permits failures and has room for forgiveness begin to develop. Later still, children seek out friends who have similar personalities and values. In all of childhood, friendships are linked to gender-boys build relationship with boys and girls with girls. According to Richards (1983), adults who were classified as "warm" were found to have had more mutually satisfying relationship during childhood than other adults who were "aloof."

Burke (1993) stated that first impressions are important. How a visitor is greeted can make a difference in what the person thinks about the church and how the person responds to efforts to involve him in the life of the church. Also it may effect one if a person joins a Bible class and ultimately, whether he or she has a personal faith. Elkind (1981) stated that being polite to children shows in a most simple and direct way that we value them as people and care about their feeling. The essence of good manners is not the ability to say the right words at the right time but, rather, thoughtfulness and consideration of others. Politeness is one of the most simple and effective ways of easing stress in children and of helping them to become thoughtful and sensitive people themselves.

Burke (1994) and Davis (1979) suggested that outreach to the children by the teacher should be personal, from heart of concern, bearing witness of faith without gimmicks

or give away. Strawn (1993) stated that we must reach out before teaching can take place. If you do not reach out to a unchurched child, he may never be reached for Christ.

Turner (1992) and Meier (1977) maintained that a local church can become one of the major influences on the child's self concept. Baker (1992) and Briggs (1975) suggested that each child must feel loved and worthy to have emotional well being in the physical world. Dobson (1983) & Langdon & Stout (1962) all suggested that attitudes which should be taught are actually extrapolations of the Judeo-Christian ethic, including honesty, respect, kindness, love, human dignity, obedience, responsibility, reverence. Dobson (1983) stated that these time-honored principles can be conveyed to the next generation as Moses wrote nearly 4000 years ago in the book of Deuteronomy. Attitudes cannot be instilled in a two minute prayer or brief formalized training sessions. Adults must live out these time honored principles from morning to night.

Parachin (1992) stated parents should give the children the opportunity to take risks by trying new religious experiences and try new rituals. Hunter (1956) noted it is normal and healthy for children to be curious about the religious ways of others. Ostling (1991) noted that children have a spiritual curiosity in which they need the opportunity to learn what various religious traditions teach and what these traditions offer us. Henderson (1993) stated

that exploring other religious beliefs outside traditional Judeo-Christian domain may bring a new understanding of spirituality.

Myers & Martin (1993) stated that we must work with the whole child in order to adequately deal with the faith dimension of their lives and foster a sense of wonder. Traditions within adult lives help children make sense out of their experiences, for Roy (1994) stated that human need ritual to live by; religious life is no exception. Without rituals an identity cannot be established because one is known by what he does. Henderson (1993) revealed that certain rituals practiced at camp are a special way to develop spirituality and a concern for nature. Spirituality is a personal experience in which prayers can be helpful. By setting aside a time and often a place for contemplation, we highlight to children the importance of spirituality. Rituals are defined as something that is done at an appointed time in an appointed way, and consistent over the years. Drovdahl (1991) revealed children often use stories of their faith traditions as a resource for self-definition. Roy (1994) stated children learn first by experience and actions. Children can learn about Christ by participating in the celebration of the faith through regular worship services, worship services on special days, fellowships, and other church programs and activities. Children need to have a faith affirmed as something to celebrate, not just

tolerate.

Turner (1992) & Elliot et al (1976) related that physical activity period provides a rich source of opportunities for students to observe, to interact, to compete, to cooperate, and challenge each other. Johnson & Kollman (1992) noted that a diversity of people gives the camper opportunity to interact with people who are different. Turner (1992) believed that in order to integrate the truths of God and Christ into every area of life there must be a merging of Christian education and recreation as it relates to children. Hands-on experiences allow the children to learn by doing. As children get involved with other children they learn to share which will benefit the social experience. Through recreation a learner becomes aware of society, self, and what it means to be formed in the image of God. This self-awareness of the child helps the child to become of aware of one's gifts, strengths, weaknesses.

According to Turner (1992), recreational experiences such as games allow children to learn to take turns, accept boundaries, accept rules, decision, improve powers of observation and develop leadership skills. Sports allow children to make a long term commitment of interpersonal relationship of a more intense nature. Through camping, children have the opportunity to escape, concentrate, relax, be curious and develop a greater appreciation for God.

Drovdahl found that the very nature of camp draws campers beyond themselves and therefore encourages spiritual growth. Camp places us face-to-face with others. Camp calls us out of egocentrism and toward allocentrism. Turner (1992) found that drama experiences encourages both formal and informal insight by the participants. Nature can be brought to the learner by zoos and wildlife displays. Zoos are maps that allow the educator to use a stimulating environment to study geography, photography, human behavior. Through museums a child can visualize history and see a new world of the past. Music is accepted recreation of all ages that greatly modifies behavior. Through these experiences each child will have the opportunity to see how the church can be a part of everyday life which can add meaning, relevance and purpose to the children's lives.

Halverson (1982) related that church is the only institution in society in which children are exposed to people of all ages. At church children can learn how to relate to people of all ages and backgrounds and see how people are alike even at different times in their lives.

Elkind (1968) revealed that children help to socialize other children into new or established social circles. Lowry & McNeel (1994) revealed that kids need a fun, safe, recreation-based program in which they can socially interact with other children of the same age. A place with fun, games, laughter and friendship, excitement and challenge,

and a feeling of being a part without having to be good at something.

Bruce (1993) stated that when children play, they create a context and make sense and derive meaning from their lives. Play is about excellence, quality and high level functioning. It uses the technical prowess, competence, craftsmanship and skill that a child acquires during life. Thomas (1979) stated that children's play should take place with other people in order for mental pictures of himself or herself to be affirmed by others. Bruce (1993) revealed that children try to keep hold of their firsthand experiences. Often their efforts are unconventional and highly idiosyncratic and personal. Lowery & McNeely (1994) revealed that children's fitness can change negative attitudes toward activity into positive self-image-building fun. Children need to be able to explore their own physical abilities in a non-competitive and accepting environment. Bruce (1993) stated that play is important way of wallowing in ideas, feeling and relationship and gaining mastery and control over difficult events. A well-rounded, organized, and Christ-centered children's fitness program can provide this nurturing environment, and move kids toward lifelong health. Johnson & Kollman (1992) noted that a camper learns to accept himself, his strengths, abilities, and uniqueness and better differentiate himself from the needs, feelings and

identities around him.

Johnson (1992) found small group activities are better for children since there is a tendency for large groups of children to attack others and overwhelm other children with argumentative points. Halliday (1991) revealed that small group experiences are unique and powerful aspects of camp life and is of primary importance to social learning. The sense of unity, feeling of friendship and the sense of accomplishment to task as they interact and cooperate to achieve common group goals, they see individual differences.

Fitzpatrick (1991) found that teachers need to affirm and enlarge our children's understanding by drawing on their direct experiences of what they see and touch each day. Bullock (1992) found that children who are coached or praised on specific concepts contribute more to cooperative, positive interaction.

Description and Justification for Solutions

On the basis of the preceding bibliographic research, the writer was convinced that the church program must be attractive, relevant, exciting, focused, appropriate, personable, in order for religious participation by children to take place.

The writer met with all the church ministerial staff to talk about the problem in the church that will be addressed by the practicum. Input and approval was gained by the pastor in order to undertake with the steps of this

practicum program to increase religious participation by children in the activities of the church. Meetings were held with all volunteer workers who work with children in Sunday School or in any other capacity.

The children were contacted about future events in the children's area of the church. The children's ideas were presented in a forum and discussed with the leaders of the church. Different curriculum and activity and travel brochures were ordered in order to review of the type of program that was needed to increase religious participation by the children.

The church newsletter, along with letters to the parents, children and teachers each week, served to communicate concerning activities during the program. Also the children's workers took part in the activities of the practicum by visiting many of the families of the children and telling the adults what took place in the program.

Each child that participated in the program had the opportunity to be exposed to an expanded church program that allowed the child to rethink and re-evaluate the experience they had at church in the past.

The solution included curriculum development and adaptation, multi-church activities, individual group time, children self-evaluation instrument, and needs based program. The literature suggested a number of approaches where first the teachers or workers and children in the

church make personal visits (Burke, 1994) with the children in the community by a focused campaign (Canata, 1991) to tell what events are happening in the church and what events will be happening over the next few months. Many different themes (Miller, 1994) would be explored with the children in succeeding months. These themes of recreation, sports, history, citizenship, race relations, nature, families focused on the children living in a world where religion, in a very natural way can impact every facet of their life.

Children had the opportunity to be children in an environment where they were free to play, release tensions and work with the other children through play to find answers (Woods, 1992) that intergrate religion, the church and family. An outdoor setting provided the children with an environment that can provide a rich source of truth that can be applied to their lives. Hands-on experiences allowed the children to learn by doing (Turner, 1992). The church program environment would be attractive and motivating (Feucht, 1991); everything the children saw in class would hold them to an environment that teaches.

The curriculum incorporating activities such as art (Turner, 1992) gave the children an opportunity to learn about Christian values that needed to be learned as they deat with a real world. Fitzpatrick (1991) found that the world of children must be enlarged by broader experiences with adults taking a holistic approach to dealing with

children.

This church became a positive influence (Turner, 1992), on the child's self-concept by providing loving teachers (Baker, 1992); teachers that were examples (Dobson, 1983); and teaching about Judeo-Christian ethics. Through stories of different faith traditions and struggles (Roy, 1994), the children had their faith affirmed which provided for self-definition. The children experienced different environments and saw how people of the past and present have dealt with their environment and their lives.

With this model, the writer is convinced that the program gave relevance to the work of the church as the church fulfilled its mission to provide the best religious education possible for the children.

Report of Action Taken

The writer met with the pastor and others of the ministerial staff to discuss the need to increase religious participation by the children in the church grades 1 - 6. The documented evidence of the problem was discussed in this meeting. A meeting was held with the adults who work in Sunday School with children in order to discuss some of the same needs based on the documentation that was presented to the pastor. Much of the writer's conversation centered also on involvement of children who had never taken part in church activities. The writer met with the Budget and Finance Committee to discuss monies that would be used from the

budget, what monies and supplies that could be solicited from church members and under what conditions fees would be charged to the children. A detailed budget was developed by the writer which was presented to the staff taking part in this model.

The church newsletter was used to inform church members in detail what was to take place over the next eight months and the need for adults willing to take part in this model. A two-day worker training and planning meeting was held to discuss the curriculum, promotion, program, calendar, supplies, budget, travel arrangements, building use, evaluation and the overall scope of the model.

Arrangements were made with all the representatives from the different sites that would be visited by the children. A letter was sent by the writer to the children and adults concerning our calendar, people, places and events during this time. The children of the church and the visitors in Sunday School were visited by leaders of the model. This gave the children the opportunity to ask questions and also allowed the parents or guardians to ask questions about what they were doing. When each leader talked about the program and many different events the children were excited and wanted to come.

Each child that attended any church event or activity initially had information about them put on the "activities checklist" handout. From the first session on program staff

knew what activities the child had participated in. The program staff were responsible for filling out the appropriate part of the form after each session and turned the form in to the office.

"Group Activities Checklists" were completed on each child by adult leaders as children took part in the different activities weekly. This checklist measured the child's interest and participation in that week's activity.

Each week in Departments 1, 2, 3 the teachers filled out a form signifying how many visitors they had in their department. The teachers in each department turned the visitor card in with vital information about the child. The writer then transferred numerical figures from each department to the "Sunday School Guest Attendance Log" and then tallied the figures for that Sunday in all the Children's classes. At the end of each week the total amount of different visitors who attended the activities were tallied on the "Guest Activities Attendance Log".

At the end of each weekly activity, a "Church Attitude Checklist" was completed on each child. The adult workers asked the child a series of questions related to the child's feelings about what had taken place at the church and with the off-campus activities.

During the eight months of the model, there was a different theme each month. In conjunction with the month's theme, the children took field trips - local and out of -

town to reinforce the current theme. The daily activities included a devotional, arts and crafts, table games and recreational games that took place inside the building, music time, special guest speakers/leaders who involved the children in hands - on experiences such as seeing a bug collection or holding an antique item from the Civil War. The children had the opportunity to be involved or take part in dramas and act out events of their own making and scripted material. There were always refreshments furnished for the children to take on trips and or even enjoy a break time during the sessions.

During the first month the theme was "God Loves All People". Activities included a field trip to New Orleans. During the second month the theme's was "Talent and Responsibility." With the focus of "you are talented" and "being a responsible person," the children had the opportunity to go to a military base to see people who were talented, responsible and had a special job to do. With the theme of "Friends" during the third month, the children focused on friends are different from you - even in race, beliefs, country, language. The visit to the "Civil Rights" museum was one of the highlights of the month for the children. The fourth month theme was "Obedience and Families." Listening to other, and the importance of this in families was focused on. A field trip to historical battlefield in Vicksburg helped the children see what

obedience and families meant to each other to survive the Civil War.

The fifth and part of the sixth month focused on the physical world and universe. The theme was "Caring For Your World and Universe." Some of the field trips included a trip to an aquarium, nature trail walk in a state park and a trip to a planetarium. The last part of the sixth month focused on the child being a leader to save the planet from pollution and destruction. The theme for the seventh month was "Citizenship," with the field trip to the police department. The final month focused on moving the children to think about something they can do all their life to help people. The theme was "Lifelong Skills to Help Other People. A field trip to a nursing home and also taking part in Sunday worship service finished the model on "Giving Yourself to Help Others."

During the first month of implementation of this practicum, one unexpected event or barrier was the Minister of Music and Youth accepting another staff position in a church in another town. Several families who were loyal to this staff member left the church, further adding to the declining attendance of children. During the fourth month of the practicum a new staff member was "called" (hired) to fill this vacant position. The hiring of a new staff member to lead the music and youth program has had a positive impact on total church attendance.

During the winter months several activities related to the outdoors such as field trips were changed at the last minute to compensate for the changes in the weather. The children still had the opportunity to take part in the activities at a another time and date. During the spring attendance in all events increased with improved weather conditions.

Other roadblocks that effected attendance was the city and county Saturday recreation programs for children. Many boys who attended the program had softball and soccer practice on Saturday morning. When there was a major conflict with the program, the times were changed to the afternoon so the children could take part in both the games and the church activities.

In Sunday School each Sunday morning, the two teachers for the first and second grade did not show up much of the time during this model. The two individuals worked on Sunday, yet they would not call each other and tell the other one that they would be out that Sunday. In an emergency, the teachers in the third and fourth grades would let the first and second grade children come into their class. The writer gave the third and fourth grade teachers extra copies of the curriculum so they could adapt their teaching each week if it was necessary to combine the two classes. The writer went to both of the teachers and talked about the problem of their absenteeism. Since the

discussion at least one teacher is in the class each Sunday morning. The lack of a teacher impacted the children. Some children told their parents and other teachers that they did not want to come to class since the teachers did not show up for class.

One unexpected event that happened with transportation was when arrangements had been made for transportation and a specific number of children on different field trips. Even though some children said they were going on the trip, the children would not show up for the event. Transportation was rented and fees paid. A note had to go out to the parents and significant adults telling them that if they had signed up for an event, the church was obligated to pay for rental and fees. Before an event the children were reminded to let one of the leaders know whether or not they were going on the event.

The staff sent follow-up letters to the parents and children inviting them to continue to be a part of the future church events and be a part of the Sunday activities each week. Evaluation of the Day Camp by the staff and the Minister of Education was presented to the Pastor and the church leadership.

Chapter V

Results, Discussion and Recommendations

Results

The problem that was addressed in this practicum was that children in grades 1-6 in church felt the church had no relevance for them; they were frustrated and alienated. The children no longer attended Sunday School or worship or even invited their neighborhood friends to a church which they state did not minister to them. The children were frustrated and alienated by a church that had no relevance for them as church members or was relevant to issues children in the community were faced with.

The solution strategy that was utilized in this practicum included curriculum development and adaptation, multi-church activities, individual group time, children self-evaluation instruments, and needs-based programs. The writer was convinced that through teacher home visits and different theme developments each month the children would see in a very natural way how religion could impact every facet of their life.

The first outcome of the practicum was that ten out of fifteen children who are church members would attend the children's activities each month as tabulated on an activities checklist (see Appendix A).

The activities checklist indicated each child's attendance and absence each week during the month as recorded over the eight months of activities. During the

first week of activities sixteen children attended the orientation and the "God Loves All People" activities. The second week nine children attended the "George Washington" activity. The third week seven children attended a continuation of Week Two's theme. With the first trip during the week to New Orleans, attendance went back up to nine.

During the first week of the second month the attendance was four children. These numbers represented both a holiday week and an all night activity attended mainly by boys. The second week of the second month the attendance was fifteen children who took part in the "Thomas Jefferson" activities. The third week, concerning "talents," nine children attended the activities. The fourth week twelve children attended the "responsibility" activity. Seven children took part in the activities related to the trip to Camp Shelby military base the fifth week of the second month.

During the first week of the third month nine children took part in the trip to Georgia Pacific. The theme, "Friends," highlighted the second week of the third month with eight children attending. With the continuation of the previous theme, seventeen children attended the activities. The fourth week included a trip to the Civil Rights Museum in which nine children took part in the week's activities.

The first week of the fourth month focused on the

theme, "Obedience," with seven children taking part in the activities. The second week focused on the theme, "Families," with eight children also taking part. As the present theme continued in the third week, eight children took part in the activities. Fifteen children took part in the fourth week's activities which highlighted the trip to Vicksburg.

During the first week of the fifth month, eight children took part in the "Caring for the World" theme. The second week eight children went to the Aquarium of the Americas. Six children took part in the trip to the Sea Aquarium the third week. Ten children took part in the "Nature" activity during the fourth week. Five children went to Paul B. Johnson State Park during the fifth week of the fifth month.

Nine children took part in the first week of activities during the sixth month related to "Stars." Six children took part in the trip to the Planetarium the second week. The same six children took part in the "Leadership" theme the third week. Five children went on the field trip to "Kamper Park" the fourth week.

Eight children took part in the field trip to police headquarters the first week of the seventh month. The second week eighteen children took part in the activities related to "Self-Image." Eighteen children also took part in activities the third week related to "Citizenship."

Seven children took part in the continuation of the current theme the fourth week.

Fourteen children took part in the "Lifelong Skills" activities the first week of the eighth month. Eight children visited the nursing home the second week of the month. Twenty-nine children visited the church service the third week.

The results of the activities checklist indicated that at end of the model an average of 10.40 of 15 children each month who are church members attended children's activities.

Outcome two in the practicum was that ten out of fifteen children would take part in the small group activities in each session as measured on the Group Activities Checklist (see Appendix B). Between three and twenty children took part in the questionnaire each week. The Group Activities Checklist measured the child's participation ranging from much, some, and never to the child's like or dislike of the week's activity.

Fourteen children liked the second week of activities with no children disliking the week of activities related to "People." Eleven of the children participated much with three children participating some. With the third week focusing on the current theme and also expanding the theme, "Character," fifteen children liked to study, with no children disliking the study. Twelve children participated much, with only three children participating some.

Ten children liked the field trip to "New Orleans" the next week, with no children disliking the trip. Eight children participated much on the activity, with two of the children participating some. These were first grade children who wanted to play outside instead of staying in the church van.

Seven children took part in the all night skating and bowling activities. All seven children liked the activities, with no children disliking the activities. Six of the seven children participated much in the events, with one child who wanted to go home because it was so late.

Eleven children like the camping experience with no children disliking the activity. Nine children participated much, with two children participating some.

The theme for the next two weeks focused on "Responsibility and Talents." Fourteen children the first week and sixteen children the second week liked the activity, with no children disliking the activity. Twelve children participated much the first week, with thirteen the second week participating much. Two children the first week and three children the second week participated some.

Eleven children liked the trip to the Armed Forces Museum with no children disliking the activity. Eight children participated much by climbing on equipment while three children complained about the heat and were ready to go home.

All nine children liked the trip to the pulpwood plant because they could tour and take part in science experiments. With the hands-on science experiments of making pulp the nine children participated much.

All thirteen children who participated liked the theme, "Loyalty To One's Friend." Ten children participated much, while three children participated some.

Fourteen children participated and liked the trip to the Civil Rights museum, with no children disliking the trip. The children were amazed by what had taken place thirty years ago. Eleven children participated much with only three children participating some.

Over the next two weeks the theme, "Changing Families," was explored, with fourteen children the first week and ten children the second week liking the program. Eleven children the first week and nine children the second week participated much. Only three children the first week and one child the second week participated some.

All nine children liked the trip to the national park. Seven children participated much, with only two children participating some. The two children got tired of climbing hills.

All eleven children liked the theme study of the Jewish "Exodus." Two children participated some in the study, with nine children participating much.

All eight children liked the study on how different

groups of people have much in common. Six children participated much, with two children only participating some. Two of the children were bothered by the rocking sensation of the boat on the Mississippi River.

Six children liked the activities related to learning about people who are different from you. Five children participated much, with only one child participating some.

Ten children liked their trip to the "Aquarium of Americas" in New Orleans, Louisiana. Nine of the children participated much, with only one child participating some.

The ten children liked the nature walk activity the next week. Nine out of ten children participated much, with only one child getting tired of the two-mile walk and really complaining.

All six children liked having the opportunity to write about what they believe. Five children participated much in these activities, and one child did not want to tell what he believed.

All nine children enjoyed the trip to the planetarium. The nine children liked the experience and all nine of the children participated much. This is the first time using this instrument that there was total participation.

Eight children participated in the activities during the week. All eight liked the activities and the discussion by the adults about fears. Six children participated much, with two children participating some. These children were

reluctant to talk about their fears.

Ten children liked the activities related to going to the park and playing team sports such as baseball, basketball and flag football. Eight children participated much, with two children participating some. The complaints centered around the outside heat of these activities.

Three children liked the week's activities, with no children disliking the activities. Two children participated much and one child participated some. All the children did not like to be quiet and sit still for the movie.

Seventeen children liked the tour of the police facilities. Eleven children participated much, with five children participating some and one child participating none. This young girl did not want to take the tour since she told the writer that the "jail was for bad people only".

Sixteen children liked the activities related to self image. Thirteen children participated much, with three children participating some.

With the study of "Zacchaeus" sixteen children liked the week long activities. Thirteen children participated much, with three children participating some. With the same theme continuing the next week nineteen children liked the activities, fifteen children participated much, and four children participated some.

All twenty children enjoyed writing letters to their

friends. Sixteen participated much, with four participating some.

The last week of activities for the children focused on helping senior adults in the community with baskets. Seven children liked the activities. Six out of seven participated much, with only one participating some. The one child who did not get as involved in handing out baskets had never been around older adults. The child felt uncomfortable in a nursing home environment.

The results of the group activities checklist indicated that a high of 19 out of 20 children whose participation and interest were recorded took part in the small group activities that were all-inclusive and of interest to children of the model.

Outcome three was that there would be an average of one visitor in Sunday School each week in the Children's Division over an eight month period of time as measured on a guest attendance log (see Appendix C).

The results of the weekly guest attendance log are indicated in Table 1. It can be seen in Table 1 that church members attending remained consistent, with an average attendance of five children in Sunday School. Attendance varied from a low of two children that are church members to nine children in the Children's Division. Visitors ranged from 0 to a high of 5 children visiting Sunday School during the week, with an average of one child per week. Total

attendance by members and visitors ranged from a low of three children to a high of ten children. The average total attendance for the Children's Division was six children.

The data does indicate that during weeks six, seven and eight there was an increase in Sunday participation which coincides with the Christmas Holiday season. During the Winter months there was a fluctuation in attendance until the month of May, beginning in week thirty-two with an increase by members and visitors in attendance which coincided with schools being out and the summer schedule.

Table 1

Thirty-Six Week Attendance Data

Sunday School Week	Total Members Present	Total Visitors Present	Total Members & Visitors Present
1	5	2	7
2	5	3	8
3	6	2	8
4	4	0	4
5	4	0	4
6	6	1	7
7	5	0	5
8	7	2	9
9	5	0	5
10	5	1	6
11	5	0	5
12	3	1	4
13	-	-	-
14	3	0	3
15	5	0	5
16	6	0	6
17	5	5	10
18	6	1	7

(table continues)

19	4	2	6
20	4	0	4
21	5	0	5
22	4	1	5
23	3	0	3
24	3	4	7
25	6	0	6
26	4	0	4
27	5	0	5
28	4	1	5
29	6	0	6
30	2	0	2
31	4	1	5
32	6	0	6
33	9	1	10
34	6	3	9
35	6	2	8
36	8	2	10
Average attendance	5	1	6

The success on this objective of having at least one visitor per week during the eight month period was attributed to the weekday activities, the children inviting other children and the role of most of the Sunday School teachers and adult volunteers who worked hard during the practicum experience.

Outcome four was that five children who are not members of the church would attend seventy-five percent of the children's activities during an eight month period of time as tabulated on the Guest Attendance Log (see Appendix D).

Fourteen different children who are not church members attended the activities of the model. One child attended only for two weeks which represents only six percent of the activities while another child attended 16 different weeks which represents 48 percent of the activities. Fourteen different children attended an average of 29 percent of the activities. The success of enlisting more children to come was the result of outreach by the workers, children and the Sunday School workers. The percentage of activities was due to season, family scheduling conflicts and sporting events.

Table 2

Guest Attendance Activities Data

Child	Number Of Activities Attended	Percent Of Activities Attended	Number Of Activities Absent	Percent Of Activities Absent
A	16	48	17	52
B	2	6	31	94
C	5	15	26	85
D	4	12	27	88
E	3	9	31	91
F	3	9	31	91
G	11	33	22	67
H	4	12	27	88
I	11	33	22	67
J	12	36	21	64
K	16	48	17	52
L	16	48	17	52
M	14	42	19	57
N	15	45	18	55
Average	9.5	28.5	24.5	71.5

Outcome five was that ten out of fifteen children would feel they are part of the church community as evidenced by the children completing eight out of ten positive responses on the Church Attitude Checklist (see Appendix E).

No child at any stage said or acted like they disliked any of our activities as a whole for the week. Only one child never participated in an activity in the period of this model.

Fifteen different children from the community who are not members of the church took part in the Church Attitude Checklist. These fifteen children felt that the church trip to different places was fun. No children who are not church members indicated in the first question that the trips were not fun. Thirteen out of fourteen children who are church members felt the trips were fun. Only one child who is a member felt the trips to different places was not fun.

Question 2 of the checklist indicated that fourteen out of fifteen children who are not church members felt that studying the Bible was made interesting by the teachers. One child felt that it was not made interesting by what took place. Twelve out of fourteen children who are church members felt the Bible was also made interesting by the teachers. Two children who are church members felt the Bible was not made interesting by the teachers.

All fifteen children who are not members felt that the church really cared about them. All fourteen children who

are church members felt that the church also really cared about them.

Fifteen children who were visiting felt that they wanted to invite their friends to all the activities. This was also unanimously reflected by fourteen children who are church members wanting to invite their friends.

The fifteen visitors and the fourteen children who are church members felt that they liked meeting other children who are not members of the church but come to the activities. No children answered question five with a "No."

The results of question 6 indicated that all fifteen visitors and the fourteen children who are church members felt the adults did help them as they did different activities. No children felt they were not getting the help they needed.

Fourteen children indicated in answering question 7 that doing different activities with the Bible was interesting to them. One child who was not a church member indicated they did not like the activities with the Bible. Thirteen children who are church members indicated the Bible activities were interesting. The results indicated that one child who is a church member did not like doing the activities with the Bible.

All fourteen visitors and fifteen church members felt that the Sunday School teachers should do different activities each month. No child in either category felt the

teachers should do the same activities each month.

Thirteen children who are not church members indicated in question 9 that they liked coming to the church. Two children indicated they did not like coming to the church. Twelve children who are church members liked coming to the church. Two children who are church members said they did not like coming to the church.

The results of question 10 indicated that all fifteen children who are not church members thought that different activities at church were fun. These results were consistent with the first question which was the same as question 10 but asked in a different form. All fourteen children who are church members felt that the activities at church were fun. These results are different from question 1 in which all fifteen children felt the activities were fun. One child put the answer "No" for the first answer and "Yes" for question ten.

The analysis of the statistical data of the eight month implementation of the practicum represents the following:

An average of 10.41 children out of fifteen children who are church members attended the children's activities each month as tabulated on an Activities Checklist (see Appendix A).

Ten out of fifteen children took part in the small group activities in each session as measured on the Group Activities Checklist (see Appendix B). The actual

participation represents nineteen out of twenty children took part in group activities as measured by the checklist.

There was an average of one visitor in Sunday School each week in the Children's Division over an eight month period of time as measured on a Guest Attendance Log (see Appendix C).

Fourteen children who were not members of the church attended 29 percent of the children's activities during an eight month period of time as tabulated on the Guest Activities Attendance Log (see Appendix D).

Fourteen out of fifteen children who are not members of the church felt they were part of the church community as evidenced by the children completing eight out of ten positive responses on the Church Attitude Checklist (see Appendix E).

Discussion

The impact of this practicum over the last eight months can be seen in the lives of the children who are church members and the children from our community who now attend our church. The teachers are seeing that each child is important. People in the church are talking about ministry to children and are talking about what can be done to reach out to the children of the community. There is now an awareness by adults who work with the children in music, education, missions, and Vacation Bible School that our church must provide and get involved in the lives of the

children of different cultural, economic and social backgrounds.

An average of 10.47 children out of 15 children who are church members attended the children's activities each month. The children who are church members now want to attend the religious activities of the church. The colorful pictures and drawings that now are on the walls are inviting to children who are church members. The children want to participate in the activities every time children's activities are offered. The parents are talking about positive things that are happening in the lives of the children.

Ten out of fifteen children took part in the small group activities in each session. All of the children liked the different activities and their checklist indicated this. The girls did not fully participate in the camping activities since they felt that it was a boy activity. On many of the activities, one sixth grade boy felt like he should be in with the teenagers and not with the little children. One boy and one girl participated to some degree in all the activities. Both these children are very shy and they did indicate that they did like all the activities.

There was an average of one visitor in Sunday School each week in the Children's Division over an eight month period of time. Even though this represents a meeting of the outcome the writer believes that if the teachers in the

Children's One Department in Sunday School would have attended more, the average in the whole division would have been greater than one.

Fourteen children who are not members of the church attended 29 percent of children's activities. During the model there were more children who were not members of the church who took part, but the children did not attend as many activities as anticipated. The writer believes that the program staff did a good job of reaching out to the community and letting the children and their parents know what was going to take place. Holidays, weather, and other sporting events like football, basketball and softball impacted the activities a child could attend.

Fourteen out of fifteen children who are not church members felt they were a part of the church community. One sixth grader did not like the Bible Study or like going to church since he felt he should be in a class with teenagers.

With the combination of curriculum development and adaptation, multi-cultural activities, individual group time and needs based religious education the children's area is now a hub of life, growth, excitement and renewal of purpose. From the writer's perspective, the solution was appropriate and reachable. The successful outcomes are thought to be directly related to the work of all persons involved in the practicum.

Recommendations

The first recommendation is that children who take part in the field trips must attend the weekday activities. Children who did not participate during the week would show up for the field trips. The children would not know how the field trip related to what had taken place the previous week.

The second recommendation is that during holidays and major sporting events and weather extremes activities should be scaled back. By looking at school calendars, city league recreation such as soccer, basketball and softball the model can be adjusted to take into consideration other events that will divide the children's loyalty and time.

The third recommendation is that at the beginning of this model the workers need to sign up and let the director know what field trips they can and cannot attend. Some field trip activities had many adult chaperones and leaders while others did not have enough workers/adult leaders.

Dissemination

This practicum will be shared with the other ministerial staff in the writer's work setting. The practicum solutions and outcomes have been shared with the key leaders in the church's Children's Division. Other plans are to share the practicum with church leaders on a state and national level. Several denominational leaders are aware of what the writer is addressing in this model.

They have asked for copies of this practicum.

Both the Home Mission Board and the Baptist Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention will be sent copies of this practicum. The writer looks forward to utilizing with even greater success this practicum as he works with leaders to help them as they work with children concerning the role of religion in the lives of children.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

ACTIVITIES CHECKLIST

ACTIVITIES CHECKLIST

Observer's Name_____

Child's Name _____

Church where the child is a member_____

Date: _____

Please check the items on each question to reflect the childs attendance each month.

Month I	Yes	No
1. God loves all people (activity I)	___	___
2. George Washington (activity II)	___	___
3. Continuation of current themes (activity III)	___	___
4. Trip to New Orleans (Activity IV)	___	___
Month II		
1. Lock-In (activity I)	___	___
2. Thomas Jefferson (activity II)	___	___
3. Talents (activity III)	___	___
4. Responsibility (activity IV)	___	___
5. Trip to Camp Shelby (activity V)	___	___
Month III		
1. Trip to Georgia Pacific Plant (activity I)	___	___
2. Friend (activity II)	___	___
3. Friend theme continued (activity III)	___	___
4. Trip to Civil Rights museum (activity IV)	___	___
Month IV		
1. Jesus teaching on Obedience (activity I)	___	___
2. Changing families (activity II)	___	___
3. Continuation of theme (activity III)	___	___

4. Trip to Vicksburg (activity IV) ___ ___

Month V

1. Taking care of the world (activity I) ___ ___

2. Trip to Aquarium (activity II) ___ ___

3. Marine Life Aquarium (activity III) ___ ___

4. Nature (activity IV) ___ ___

5. Trip to Johnson State Park (activity V) ___ ___

Month VI

1. Stars (activity I) ___ ___

2. Trip to Planetarium (activity II) ___ ___

3. Leadership (activity III) ___ ___

4. Trip to Kamper Park (activity IV) ___ ___

Month VII

1. Trip to Hattiesburg Police Department (activity) ___ ___

2. Jesus promotes self-image (activity II) ___ ___

3. Develop citizenship skills (activity III) ___ ___

4. Citizenship continued (activity IV) ___ ___

Month VIII

1. Lifelong skills (activity I) ___ ___

2. Visit nursing home (activity II) ___ ___

3. Attending Sunday Services (activity III) ___ ___

APPENDIX B

GROUP ACTIVITIES CHECKLIST

GROUP ACTIVITIES CHECKLIST

Observers Name_____

Child's Name _____

Church where the Child is a member_____

Date _____

Please check the childs participation and interest in the activities during the sessions.

Participation			Group Activities	Interest	
Much	Some	Never		Like	Dislike
____	____	____	People	____	____
____	____	____	Character	____	____
____	____	____	Games-New Orleans	____	____
____	____	____	Bowling & Skating	____	____
____	____	____	Camping	____	____
____	____	____	Talent Game	____	____
____	____	____	Game-Continued	____	____
____	____	____	Museum	____	____
____	____	____	Pulpwood	____	____
____	____	____	Loyalty	____	____
____	____	____	Rights	____	____
____	____	____	Changing Families	____	____
____	____	____	Families	____	____
____	____	____	Hardship & Obedience	____	____
____	____	____	Freedom	____	____
____	____	____	Differences	____	____
____	____	____	Citizenship	____	____
____	____	____	Workbook - Nature	____	____

____	____	_____	Nature Walk	____	_____
____	____	_____	Acquarium	____	_____
____	____	_____	Writing-Beliefs	____	_____
____	____	_____	Stars	____	_____
____	____	_____	Fears	____	_____
____	____	_____	Park (Competitive Sports)	____	_____
____	____	_____	Movie Critique	____	_____
____	____	_____	Police	____	_____
____	____	_____	Self-image	____	_____
____	____	_____	Honesty	____	_____
____	____	_____	Cooperation	____	_____
____	____	_____	Relating (Letter Writing)	____	_____
____	____	_____	Baskets	____	_____

APPENDIX C

SUNDAY SCHOOL GUEST ATTENDANCE LOG

SUNDAY SCHOOL GUEST ATTENDANCE LOG

Please write in the amount of visitors in your department for the week.

Sunday School	Dept. I	Dept. II	Dept. III	Total
Week 1	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 2	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 3	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 4	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 5	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 6	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 7	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 8	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 9	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 10	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 11	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 12	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 13	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 14	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 15	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 16	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 17	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 18	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 19	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 20	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 21	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 22	_____	_____	_____	___
Week 23	_____	_____	_____	___

Week 24	_____	_____	_____	____
Week 25	_____	_____	_____	____
Week 26	_____	_____	_____	____
Week 27	_____	_____	_____	____
Week 28	_____	_____	_____	____
Week 29	_____	_____	_____	____
Week 30	_____	_____	_____	____
Week 31	_____	_____	_____	____
Week 32	_____	_____	_____	____
Week 33	_____	_____	_____	____
Week 34	_____	_____	_____	____
Week 35	_____	_____	_____	____
Week 36	_____	_____	_____	____

APPENDIX D

GUEST ACTIVITIES ATTENDANCE LOG

GUEST ACTIVITIES ATTENDANCE LOG

Total Amount Visitors

1. God loves all people (Activity) ____
2. George Washington (activity) ____
3. George Washington (activity cont.) ____
4. Trip to New Orleans (activity) ____
5. Lock-In (activity) ____
6. Thomas Jefferson (activity) ____
7. Talents (activity) ____
8. Responsibility (activity) ____
9. Trip to Camp Shelby (activity) ____
10. Trip to Georgia Pacific (activity) ____
11. Friend (activity) ____
12. Friend continued (activity) ____
13. Trip to Civil Rights Museum (activity) ____
14. Teaching on Obedience (activity) ____
15. Families (activity) ____
16. Families theme continued (activity) ____
17. Trip to Vicksburg (activity) ____
18. Ecology (activity) ____
19. Trip to Aquarium (activity) ____
20. Marine Life Aquarium (activity) ____
21. Nature (activity) ____
22. Trip to Johnson State Park (activity) ____
23. Stars (activity) ____
24. Trip to Planetarium (activity) ____

25. Leadership (activity) ____

26. Trip to Kamper Park (activity) ____

27. Trip to Hattiesburg Police Dept. (activity) ____

28. Self-image (activity) ____

29. Citzenship (activity) ____

30. Citzenship continued (activity) ____

31. Lifelong skills (activity) ____

32. Visit nursing home (activity) ____

APPENDIX E

CHURCH ATTITUDE CHECKLIST

CHURCH ATTITUDE CHECKLIST

Observer's Name_____

Child's Name _____

Church where the child is a member _____

_____

Today's date _____

Please check the item on each question to reflect your feeling.

		Yes	No
1.	The church trip to different places was fun.	___	___
2.	Studying about God (Bible) was made interesting by what the teachers did.	___	___
3.	People from the church really care about me.	___	___
4.	I want to invite my friends to all the activities at church for children.	___	___
5.	I like meeting other children who are not members of our church but who came to the different activities.	___	___
6.	The adults helped me as we did different activities.	___	___
7.	Doing different activities with the Bible material was different and interesting to me.	___	___
8.	The teachers should provide different activities for boys and girls every month.	___	___
9.	I like coming to this church.	___	___
10.	Many different activities that happen at church are fun.	___	___